

AGREEMENT BY SALVADORAN COMMANDERS TO TURN THE CASE  
OF CAPTAIN EDUARDO AVILA OVER TO A MILITARY COURT  
18 JANUARY 1984

TOLD A SALVADORAN OFFICER THAT THE MEETING ON THE SAME DAY OF SALVADORAN COMMANDERS WAS HEATED OVER THE ISSUE OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE CASE OF CAPTAIN EDUARDO ((AVILA)) AVILA. IN THE END HOWEVER, THE COMMANDERS AGREED TO THE PLAN OF GENERAL CARLOS FLORENTINO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA, MINISTER OF DEFENSE, TO TURN THE CASE OVER TO A MILITARY COURT. SAID THIS MOVE WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO KEEP AVILA UNDER DETENTION AS WANTED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. SAID THE MOVE PROBABLY WILL RESULT IN THE DETENTION OF AVILA UNTIL 17 FEBRUARY BUT IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO HOLD AVILA UNTIL 17 MARCH. THE SALVADORAN HIGH COMMAND IS HOPING THIS WILL BE SUFFICIENT TIME TO ACQUIRE EVIDENCE AGAINST AVILA FOR ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN COSTA RICA WHICH CAN BE USED AGAINST HIM IN EL SALVADOR.

2. SAID THAT THERE WAS INITIAL STRONG OPPOSITION BY THE COMMANDERS TO VIDES' ANNOUNCEMENT TO KEEP AVILA UNDER DETENTION. THERE WAS NO DISAGREEMENT OVER THE INVOLVEMENT OF AVILA IN THE SHERATON MURDER CASE NOR WAS THERE A FEELING EXPRESSED FOR A NEED TO "PROTECT" AVILA. ACCORDING TO THE FORM THE OPPOSITION TOOK WAS THAT IT WAS THE TASK OF THE

CIVIL COURTS TO PROSECUTE AVILA, NOT THE ARMY. FURTHERMORE, THERE WAS RESENTMENT THAT THE DECISION TO MAINTAIN AVILA IN CUSTODY CAME AS A RESULT OF U.S. PRESSURES.

4. IN GENERAL, THE TWO BLOCS LINED UP WITH THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS SUPPORTING VIDES AND FLORES: LIEUTENANT COLONEL OSCAR RODOLFO ((CAMPOS)) ANAYA, COMMANDER OF THE CAVALRY REGIMENT; LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEOPOLDO ANTONIO ((HERNANDEZ)), COMMANDER OF THE ARTILLERY BRIGADE; LIEUTENANT COLONEL MIGUEL ALFREDO ((VASCONCELOS)), COMMANDER OF MILITARY DETACHMENT THREE, LA UNION; LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOSE DIONISIO ((HERNANDEZ)), COMMANDER OF MILITARY DETACHMENT SIX, SONSONATE, AND LIEUTENANT COLONEL AUGUSTO CANDELARIO ((MARAVILLA)) REYES, COMMANDER OF THE SEVENTH MILITARY

5. [REDACTED] SAID THAT AFTER LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS THE COMMANDERS REACHED A CONSENSUS TO SUPPORT VIDES AND FLORES. THIS CONSENSUS PROBABLY WAS PREDICATED ON A DESIRE BY THE COMMANDERS TO AVOID JEOPARDIZING A POSSIBLE INCREASE IN U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO EL SALVADOR.

o. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THIS MEETING WAS ANOTHER TEST OF THE LEADERSHIP OF VIDES AND FLORES. [REDACTED] A MEMBER OF THE [REDACTED] ARMED FORCES

LEADERSHIP OF VIDES AND FLORES. [REDACTED] ARMED FORCES [REDACTED] SAID THAT DISCONTENT WAS GROWING OVER THE LACK OF AGGRESSIVENESS OF THE LEADERSHIP IN THE WAR AGAINST THE INSURGENTS. HE SAID THE FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR OF THE ANALYSIS COMMISSION SHOULD TAKE PLACE SOON AND HE EXPECTED THE COMMISSION TO AIR GRIEVANCES AGAINST VIDES AND

FLORES. THE AVILA DECISION PROVIDES ADDITIONAL ARGUMENTS FOR THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE LEADERSHIP.

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